

54

THE GREAT OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION



FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE
Moscow 1951

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This pamphlet is a translation of Part 2 of the *Political Education Series*, published by the *Pravda* Publishing House, Moscow 1950.

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
1. THE FIRST WORLD WAR. THE OVERTHROW OF TSARDOM	5
2. THE BOLSHEVIKS LEAD THE REVOLUTION FORWARD	17
3. THE VICTORY OF THE GREAT OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION	23
4. THE WORLD HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GREAT OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLU- TION	30
5. DEFEAT OF THE INTERVENTIONISTS AND WHITEGUARDS	35
BRIEF SUMMARY	47

1. THE FIRST WORLD WAR. THE OVERTHROW OF TSARDOM

Imperialism—the Last Stage of Capitalism

At the close of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, capitalism entered the last stage of its development—the stage of imperialism. In his book *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* Lenin was the first to disclose the characteristic features and peculiarities of imperialism and the conditions of its inevitable doom.

There is a constant struggle (competition) between the capitalists for markets and sources of raw materials. In the course of this struggle the small capitalists are ruined and squeezed out, while the big capitalists grow still richer. Dozens and hundreds of small and medium factories are replaced by several huge factories. At the beginning of the twentieth century, for example, less than one per cent of the factories in Germany owned three-quarters of the country's steam and electric power; in the United States the same percentage of factories produced nearly half of the country's total output.

Matters are not confined to capitalist production being concentrated in the hands of a small number of people. In their drive for maximum profits and to oust their competitors from the market, the big capitalists unite into trusts, syndicates and other associations. Here they fix their own prices on goods, divide the markets among themselves, determine the volume of production or merge

their industries. The capitalist associations which control the production or sale of goods are called monopolies.

By the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century the monopolies held dominant positions in capitalist economy, became the masters of entire branches of industry. The United States Steel Trust, for example, accounted for 66 per cent of the country's entire steel output in 1901.

Monopolies developed apace also in tsarist Russia. The *Prodamet* Syndicate (corporation selling products of the Russian iron and steel mills), controlled 80 per cent of the country's iron and steel output in 1910. The *Prod-vagon* Syndicate (corporation selling products of the Russian railway car works), controlled nearly all sales in this field.

The capitalist monopolies stretched their tentacles to the world market as well. Powerful international monopolies (that is, associations uniting the capitalists of different countries) emerged in the era of imperialism and seized a considerable share of the world's production of oil, nickel and zinc.

Capitalist monopolies dominate not only the economy of bourgeois states but also their political life. They actually rule these countries, appointing presidents and ministers who serve their ends. The governments in the imperialist states voice the will of the big capitalists and bankers.

Lenin defined imperialism as the highest and last stage of the development of capitalism, the stage when the monopolies begin to play the decisive role in the economic and political life of the capitalist countries. Imperialism, Lenin pointed out, is monopoly capitalism.

Having entrenched themselves in the different industries the monopoly capitalists then seek to increase their profits not so much by expanding production and developing technique, as by artificially raising prices. The price of sugar in Russia, as fixed by the sugar syndicate,

was so high that the working people could only afford to look at it. The sugar monopolies, however, pocketed huge profits.

The capitalist monopolies very often deliberately arrest the development of production and the introduction of technical improvements. The trusts not infrequently buy new inventions for the sole purpose of shelving them and thus preventing their being introduced in production, or falling into the hands of their competitors. This is how high prices are maintained. In a word, capitalist monopoly domination leads to the stagnation and decay of industry.

In the era of imperialism an ever larger number of capitalists do not run their factories; they leave this to a hired personnel, while they themselves rake in profits and idle away the time. Not engaging in any productive activity themselves the capitalists, like parasites, live on the labour of others.

In the era of imperialism the capitalists export a considerable portion of their capital to other countries in the form of loans, or as investments in railway and industrial construction. These investments are made, for the most part, in the backward countries where labour power is particularly cheap and the natural resources poorly developed. Ruthlessly exploiting the working people of these countries the capitalists make enormous profits. Thus, prior to the First World War the foreign investments of British, French and German capitalists reached 175,000-200,000 million francs which gave them an annual profit of 8,000-10,000 million francs.

The Sharpening of Capitalist Contradictions

Far from doing away with competition the capitalist monopolies intensify this competition. Competition develops between monopolies and capitalists who have not merged into monopolies, between separate monopoly

associations and inside the monopolies themselves where every capitalist is bent upon snatching the biggest share of the profits for himself. For the sake of these profits the monopolists manipulate shady transactions, engage in downright swindle and fraud. Explosions and fires at mines and plants, train wrecks, the theft of documents, bandit raids—in a word no means are too foul to smash the competitor.

In the era of imperialism the struggle of the capitalist monopolies on the international arena for markets, for raw material sources, for cheap labour power, etc., grows particularly sharp.

By the beginning of the twentieth century the world had already been divided up among the biggest imperialist powers. The imperialist states had seized territories with a population of more than 500,000,000 and turned them into colonies, that is, had deprived them of their independence and subordinated them to their rule. Britain had seized the lion's share. Before the First World War Britain's colonial possessions were 112 times the size of England herself, France's colonial territories 21 times the size of the home country, while tiny Belgium's colonies were 80 times the size of the metropolis.

But the division of colonies among the capitalist powers is not something that can be settled for any length of time. The development of capitalist countries proceeds extremely unevenly and by leaps: some countries, which previously held a foremost position, now develop their industry at a relatively slow rate, while others, which were formerly backward, overtake and outstrip them by rapid leaps. For example, Great Britain was at one time the leading industrial and sea power in the world. The British called their country the "workshop of the world," and "queen of the seas." But beginning with the close of the nineteenth century she began to lag behind, and was soon overtaken and outstripped by the United States and Germany.

The uneven economic and political development of the capitalist countries inevitably leads to a change in the relation of forces between them: one imperialist plunderer grows more powerful than another and strives to seize more territory. But the world has already been divided, all the territory seized; new territory can be obtained only by a redivision of the world, for not a single imperialist state will voluntarily give up the territory it has seized. Hence, imperialism inevitably gives rise to wars.

Lenin called imperialism "moribund capitalism."

Why? "Because," replies Comrade Stalin, "imperialism carries the contradictions of capitalism to their last bounds, to the extreme limit, beyond which revolution begins."* The most important of these contradictions are the following three:

The first contradiction is the contradiction between labour and capital. Under imperialism the exploitation of the workers and all working people becomes even more ruthless. Aided by the bourgeois state the powerful capitalist monopolies intensify their drive against the standard of living of the working class and deprive the working people of their already curtailed political and economic rights. There is only one way out for the working class: to take to arms and overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie. Imperialism brings the working class to revolution.

The second contradiction is the contradiction between the imperialist powers themselves in the struggle for foreign territories.

The imperialists in every country try to seize new or to retain the old sources of raw material, markets and fields for the export of capital, to preserve the old and to seize new colonies; they are bent on a redivision of the world. This struggle cannot be waged without wars which

* J. Stalin, *The Foundations of Leninism*, Moscow 1950, p. 13.

undermine the strength of the imperialists and shake the foundations of capitalism.

The third contradiction is the contradiction between the colonial and dependent countries on the one hand and the imperialist states on the other. Comrade Stalin points out that: "Imperialism is the most barefaced exploitation and the most inhuman oppression of hundreds of millions of people inhabiting vast colonies and dependent countries."*

The imperialists rapaciously plunder the colonies. But while exploiting the backward countries the imperialists build railways, factories and mills there. A local proletariat is formed and also a local intelligentsia. The national-liberation movement in the colonies and semicolonies grows stronger, national-liberation wars break out against the imperialist robbers. This undermines the position of capitalism.

Such are the main contradictions characteristic of "moribund capitalism."

The existence of these contradictions does not mean that capitalism will die away of itself, that it will just rot at the stalk. Lenin and Stalin teach us that capitalism cannot be overthrown without a proletarian revolution. Lenin called imperialism the eve of the proletarian revolution. In the era of imperialism proletarian revolution becomes a practical inevitability. In this period the struggle of the proletariat against capitalism particularly develops, the indignation of the peoples of the colonial and dependent countries against imperialism grows, their liberation struggle spreads, and the elements of a revolutionary outbreak accumulate in capitalist countries.

However, the proletarian revolution does not mature simultaneously in all countries. Lenin scientifically proved that the uneven development of capitalism in the era of imperialism while sharpening the contradictions of cap-

* *Ibid.*, p. 14.

italism and weakening the forces of imperialism makes it possible to break the front of imperialism at its weakest point.

"From all this," writes Comrade Stalin, "Lenin drew the conclusion that it was quite possible for the proletariat to break the imperialist front in one place or in several places, that the victory of Socialism was *possible* first in several countries or even in one country, taken singly, that the simultaneous victory of Socialism in all countries was *impossible* owing to the unevenness of development of capitalism, and that Socialism would be victorious first in one country or in several countries, while the others would remain bourgeois countries for some time longer."*

Lenin's theory of the possibility of the victory of Socialism in one country armed the proletariat with a sharp weapon of struggle for the triumph of the proletarian revolution. The proletariat of the separate countries must not remain inactive in expectation of the simultaneous victory of the revolution in all countries. It must take advantage of the favourable situation for an onslaught on its own, national bourgeoisie. Lenin's theory strengthened the faith of the proletariat in the victory of the socialist revolution. Life fully confirmed this theory.

The First World War

The First World War broke out in the summer of 1914. Two groups of imperialist states clashed in this war. One group was headed by Germany and included among other countries Austro-Hungary and Turkey. Great Britain, France and Russia, the so-called Entente, formed the other group. In 1915 Italy entered the war

* *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks). Short Course*, Moscow 1950, pp. 207-08.

on the side of the Entente, the United States following suit in 1917. Altogether 33 states took part in the First World War.

The war imposed terrible privations and sufferings on mankind. Seventy-four million men were torn away from economic pursuits and drafted into the armies, 10,000,000 men were killed on the battlefields, 20,000,000 wounded and crippled; many towns and villages destroyed, and hundreds of thousands of people were left homeless. The war brought hunger and ruin in its wake for the peoples.

In all countries of the world people asked the question: what were the causes for this bloody slaughter? Why was this fratricidal war being waged?

The bourgeoisie and landlords in all countries would have the soldiers believe that they were dying "for the fatherland." But such was not the case. The war was being waged in the interests of enriching a handful of exploiters. The First World War was brought about by profound antagonisms between the capitalist states. The two groups of imperialist robbers had long been preparing to carry out their rapacious, predatory aims. The First World War was a war for the redivision of the world, for the seizure of foreign territories and enslavement of other nations. It was an unjust war, a war of conquest by the two belligerent groups. That is why it is called an imperialist war.

While the workers and peasants were suffering terrible destitution and privations, the capitalists and landlords were amassing fortunes. They made huge profits on war contracts and swelled their incomes on the sweat and blood of the working people. The capitalists started the First World War to augment their fortunes and to rob the working people still more.

The loyal servants of the bourgeoisie—the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks in Russia and the Social-Democratic parties in the West—supported the

imperialist war. They betrayed the proletariat and sided with the imperialist bourgeoisie. The social-traitors helped the imperialists to conceal the real aims of the war, to poison the minds of the working people with the venom of nationalism. They whipped up the hatred of one nation against another, incited the workers of one country against the workers of another country.

Only the Bolsheviks, headed by Lenin and Stalin, remained faithful to the cause of Socialism, to proletarian internationalism, i.e., to the international fraternity of the workers of all countries. The Bolsheviks exposed the imperialist nature of the First World War and called upon the workers in all countries to display international proletarian solidarity. They reminded them that the workers of all countries have a common enemy—the bourgeoisie—and a common goal—to overthrow capitalism and to achieve the victory of Socialism.

The Bolsheviks called on the workers and peasants, clad in soldiers' uniform, to turn their weapons against their own bourgeoisie and landlords. To convert the imperialist war into a civil war, that is, to carry out a revolution—such was the main task the Bolsheviks advanced in those years.

It was not accidental that Russia entered the war on the side of the Entente. The fact that the most important branches of Russian industry were in the hands of Anglo-French capital and that Tsardom received thousands of millions in loans from France and Britain, chained tsardom to Anglo-French imperialism and converted Russia into its semicolony. The Russian bourgeoisie hoped to seize new markets and, by taking advantage of the war, to crush the revolutionary movement inside the country. All their hopes, however, were frustrated.

Tsarist Russia entered the war unprepared. Owing to her technical and economic backwardness, poorly developed industry and decline in agriculture, Russia's economy could not stand a prolonged war. The autocratic sys-

tem was rotten to the core, its ruling circle pursued a corrupt, traitorous policy and certain tsarist ministers were simply German spies. The tsarist army lacked guns, shells and even rifles; sometimes three soldiers had to share one rifle. It is not surprising, therefore, that the tsarist army suffered defeat after defeat. In the meantime the economic situation at home was growing from bad to worse, industry and agriculture continued to decline, transport was dislocated, there was a great shortage of raw materials, fuel and grain.

The war and economic ruin, the brunt of which the working people had to shoulder, increased the dissatisfaction of the masses. The revolutionary movement of the working class whose conditions were particularly intolerable, grew. Discontent was spreading also among other sections of the population, in the rear and at the front, in the central and in the border regions. Ever-increasing numbers of the people were arriving at the conclusion that the only way out of the situation was to overthrow the autocracy. The tsarist regime was shaken to its very foundations. A new revolution was maturing in Russia.

The February Revolution

The Petrograd workers were the first to rise against tsardom. Responding to the call of the Bolsheviks the workers called a general strike in February 1917 and poured out onto the capital's streets, winning over to their side broad sections of the soldiers. "Down with the tsar!" "Down with the war!" "We want bread!" were written on the banners of the insurgents.

The tsarist government tried to crush the uprising by force of arms. But the weapons were in the hands of the soldiers and they joined with the workers. On February 27 (March 12, New Style), 1917, the revolution in Russia had won. Tsardom, so hated by the people, was overthrown.

The February Revolution was directed against the tsarist autocracy and was carried out under the slogan "For peace, for bread, for liberty!" Like the Revolution of 1905-1907 its main object was to remove tsardom and to destroy the survivals of serfdom. That is why the February Revolution of 1917, like the Revolution of 1905-1907, is a bourgeois-democratic revolution.

The proletariat stood at the head of the February Revolution of 1917 which overthrew the tsarist monarchy. It blazed the trail of the revolution and led the mass of the soldiers, who consisted mostly of peasants. The leadership given by the proletariat and its party, the Bolshevik Party, ensured the victory of the revolution. Lenin wrote: "The revolution was made by the proletariat. The proletariat displayed heroism; it shed its blood; it swept along with it the broadest masses of the toiling and poor population."*

On the example of 1905 the workers and soldiers created Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies in the very first days of the revolution. But these Soviets were in the hands of compromising parties in the initial period.

These parties were the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties. While supporting the workers and peasants in words, in practice they defended the interests of the capitalists, landlords and kulaks. While the Bolsheviks were leading the struggle of the masses in the streets, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks were seizing the seats in the Soviets; the real defenders of the interests of the workers and peasants—the Bolsheviks, were in the minority in the Soviets.

The workers and soldiers regarded the Soviets as organs of people's power and believed that the Soviets would carry out their revolutionary demands, and that in the first place peace would be concluded. But the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks who headed the So-

* V. I. Lenin, *Letters from Afar*, Moscow 1951, p. 28.

viets, had not the slightest intention of securing peace or of carrying out the revolutionary demands of the people. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks considered that power must belong to the bourgeoisie. Resting on their majority in the Soviets they helped the bourgeoisie to power and to continue the imperialist war.

As the result of a backstairs agreement with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks the bourgeoisie formed a so-called Provisional Government. This government consisted of capitalists and landlords and from the very first days of its existence pursued a policy directed against the workers and peasants. The workers and peasants had carried out the revolution but the bourgeoisie had seized the power.

How is it to be explained that the victorious workers and peasants allowed the bourgeoisie to take over power? After the overthrow of tsardom millions of people awakened and pressed forward to political activity. They were as yet not class conscious and experienced enough to distinguish between real friends and enemies. Intoxicated with the early successes of the revolution the people believed the false speeches made by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and that bourgeois power would not prevent the Soviets from carrying on their work.

The result was a dual power in Russia after the February Revolution: the power of the workers and peasants represented by the Soviets and the power of the bourgeoisie represented by the Provisional Government.

2. THE BOLSHEVIKS LEAD THE REVOLUTION FORWARD

Lenin's April Theses

After the overthrow of tsardom the Bolshevik Party emerged from underground and began to gather and consolidate its forces. Stalin returned to Petrograd from his exile in remote Turukhansk and lost no time in directing Party activities. The Bolshevik newspaper *Pravda* banned by the tsarist authorities in 1914 on the eve of the war, once again began publication.

The Bolshevik Party was faced with the question: what was the next step, in what direction should the revolution be guided? All the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties strove to arrest the further development of the revolution and save capitalism.

The Bolsheviks alone resolutely advocated the further development of the revolution, the transition from the bourgeois-democratic revolution to the socialist revolution. Comrade Stalin called on the people not to surrender their gains, to further develop the revolution, and, above all, to strengthen the Soviets as organs of revolutionary power. The Bolsheviks held that the revolution must not stop halfway, that it must advance toward the victory of Socialism.

Lenin returned to Petrograd from abroad on the night of April 3, 1917. Thousands of workers, soldiers and sailors assembled at the Finland Railway Station to welcome him. Lenin's first words to the workers and peasants of

Russia after a long period of exile, dealt with the tasks of the struggle to win Socialism. He concluded his speech with the words: "Long live the socialist revolution!"

On the following day after his arrival in Petrograd, on April 4 (17), Lenin read his theses "The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution," at a meeting attended by Bolsheviks. These went down in history as the *April Theses*.

Lenin's *April Theses* laid down for the Party a brilliant plan of struggle for the transition from the bourgeois-democratic to the socialist revolution in our country. In his theses Lenin pointed out that the first stage of the revolution which had placed power in the hands of the bourgeoisie was passed, that it was necessary to go over to the second, socialist stage of the revolution which must place power in the hands of the proletariat and poor strata of the peasantry.

In his *April Theses* Lenin pointed out that even under the Provisional Government the war continued to be a predatory imperialist war, that it would be impossible to end the war by a just peace unless the bourgeoisie were overthrown. Lenin further pointed out that the Provisional Government would not give the people bread, peace or freedom since it was a government of capitalists and landlords, that the workers and peasants could not support such a government.

Lenin taught that the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies were the most appropriate form of revolutionary power, that it was imperative in every way to strengthen these Soviets, to win the majority in them and transfer the entire power to them. "All Power to the Soviets!"—such was the main slogan of the *April Theses*.

The Bolsheviks demanded that a number of urgent political and economic measures be immediately carried out: cessation of the imperialist war, the nationalization of all the land (that is, converting the land into the property of

the state) and the handing over of this land to the peasants, establishment of workers' control over production and distribution of products, the abolition of national oppression.

The Struggle of the Bolsheviks for the Masses

Lenin's *April Theses* provided the Party and the proletariat with a clear revolutionary line. Under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin the Bolsheviks led the struggle for the transition to the socialist revolution. They developed extensive work to win the broad mass of the people over to their side, to educate and organize them in a militant spirit.

The Bolsheviks vigorously exposed the policy of the bourgeois Provisional Government. After coming to power the bourgeoisie continued to pursue the hated policy of the tsar. The people demanded a just democratic peace but the bourgeois Provisional Government continued the imperialist war. The peasants demanded land but the Provisional Government, solidly backing the landlords, helped them retain their land. The workers demanded the establishment of control over production, an 8-hour working day and wage increases but the Provisional Government rejected these demands and supported the capitalists in every way. The peoples of Russia demanded emancipation from national oppression but the Provisional Government continued the tsarist autocracy's national policy of oppression.

The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks betrayed the interests of the people. When the unstable foundations of the bourgeois power began to give way under pressure from below, under pressure by the broad mass of the workers and soldiers, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks saved the falling Provisional Government by themselves becoming members of this government. The capitalist ministers were joined by "Social-

ist" ministers who served the interests of the Russian and foreign imperialists with the same zeal as the rest of the members of the Provisional Government.

Gradually ever broader sections of the working people began to see for themselves that the Bolshevik Party was pursuing the only correct policy, a policy that met the interests of the people. The influence of the Bolsheviks grew. Their slogan "All power to the Soviets!" was gaining ground in all parts of Russia.

On June 18, 1917, mass demonstrations of workers and soldiers, protesting the policy of the Provisional Government, were held in Petrograd and other cities under the leadership of the Bolsheviks. In Petrograd 400,000 demonstrators marched through the streets of the capital under the slogans: "Down with the war!" "Down with the ten capitalist ministers!" "All power to the Soviets!" The proletariat of Petrograd, Moscow and many other cities supported the Bolsheviks at that time.

Fearing the revolutionary movement of the masses, the Russian bourgeoisie and their Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik accomplices grovelled before foreign imperialism. Russia's economic and political dependence on the big capitalist states steadily increased. The state debt to the Anglo-French and American capitalists doubled in the course of the war.

In obedience to the wishes of the Anglo-French and Russian imperialists the Provisional Government continued the imperialist war and in June 1917 drove the soldiers at the front to take the offensive. However, as was to be expected, the offensive failed.

The bourgeoisie also tried to crush the growing revolutionary movement by force of arms. At the beginning of July 1917 workers, soldiers and sailors again poured out onto the streets of Petrograd demanding that all power be handed over to the Soviets. Notwithstanding the pacific character of the demonstration, the Provisional Government dispatched its armed forces against it. The

streets of Petrograd ran with the blood of workers and soldiers. Units of the army loyal to the Provisional Government were summoned from the front to suppress the workers.

After crushing the July demonstration, the bourgeoisie and its Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik henchmen retaliated against the Bolshevik Party aiming to behead the proletariat, to deprive the workers and peasants of their experienced and reliable leader; the Provisional Government began to carry out mass arrests of Bolsheviks. *Pravda* and a number of other Bolshevik newspapers were suppressed. A warrant was issued for Lenin's arrest.

Thus the Provisional Government sank to the depths of downright imperialism and counterrevolution.

The July events brought the dual power to an end. The whole power passed into the hands of the reactionary bourgeois Provisional Government. The Bolshevik Party was compelled again to go underground, but it used all legal possibilities in its work. It arranged for a safe hiding place for its leader, Lenin, and began to prepare for an uprising with the object of overthrowing the power of the bourgeoisie by force of arms and setting up Soviet power.

Sixth Party Congress

The Sixth Congress of the Bolshevik Party met in secret in Petrograd at the end of July 1917. Lenin was not present at the Congress: he was in hiding in a shanty near Razliv Station. But he guided the labours of the Congress through his colleagues and disciples: Stalin, Sverdlov, Molotov, Orjonikidze. Stalin firmly and resolutely steered the Congress along the Lenin line.

The frenzied campaign by the bourgeois counterrevolution was powerless to smash the revolutionary party of the proletariat. The persecution by the Provisional Government could not stop the influence of the Bolshevik

Party growing and spreading. At the time of its Sixth Congress the Bolshevik Party had grown into a big force. In five months of the revolution its membership had increased sixfold and reached 240,000.

Overcoming all difficulties and obstacles, the Bolshevik Party led the workers and peasants of Russia to the socialist revolution. The Bolsheviks proceeded from Lenin's theory about the possibility of the victory of Socialism in one country.

At the Sixth Congress Comrade Stalin resolutely opposed the Trotskyite traitors who proposed that the socialist revolution should not be started in Russia before it were victorious in the countries of Western Europe. "The possibility is not excluded," said Comrade Stalin at the Congress, "that Russia will be the country that will lay the road to Socialism. . . . We must discard the antiquated idea that only Europe can show us the way."*

Stalin's great foresight was justified. It was Russia which showed mankind the way to Socialism.

The Sixth Party Congress unanimously supported the Lenin-Stalin line and prepared for an armed uprising against the bourgeois Provisional Government. The bourgeois counterrevolution held full sway in the country at that time. The power could be wrested from its hands and the dictatorship of the proletariat established in order to build a socialist society, only through an armed uprising. The Congress stressed the importance of an alliance between the proletariat and the poor peasantry as the principal condition of the socialist revolution.

The Sixth Congress has gone down in the history of our Party as the Congress that prepared for an armed uprising, for the Great October Socialist Revolution.

* *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks). Short Course, Moscow 1950, p. 243.*

3. THE VICTORY OF THE GREAT OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

Preparations for the Armed Uprising

The situation in Russia was growing more and more tense. Economic disruption continued. The bourgeoisie and tsarist generals deliberately surrendered town after town to German troops in order with their help to strangle the Russian Revolution. The capitalists were prepared to place our whole country in bondage to the German, American, British, French and other imperialists and thus retain their power and prevent the victory of the workers and peasants.

The bourgeoisie, supported by the Anglo-French and American imperialists, prepared a counterrevolutionary plot to suppress the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants and to set up a brutal military dictatorship in Russia. At the end of August 1917 General Kornilov started a revolt. He moved counterrevolutionary units against Petrograd, hoping with the help of British tanks and American dollars to smash the revolutionary forces. But the Bolsheviks called upon the workers and soldiers to offer active armed resistance to the counter-revolution. The Kornilov revolt was crushed under the leadership of the Bolsheviks. The rout of the Kornilovites revealed the weakness of the bourgeois counterrevolution and showed that the Bolshevik Party had grown to be the decisive force of the revolution, capable of foiling the machinations of all its enemies.

From then onwards the tide of the revolution steadily rose. The struggle of the workers and peasants against the bourgeoisie and landlords spread to all parts of the country. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks kept losing influence. Turning away from the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks the mass of the workers and peasants went over to the side of the Bolshevik Party. The Bolsheviks received the majority in the Petrograd, Moscow and many other Soviets. Their influence steadily increased in the towns, villages and army. The middle peasantry joined the proletariat and poor peasants in ever larger numbers. All this created favourable conditions for the overthrow of the bourgeois power.

In mid-September 1917 Lenin who was still in hiding pointed out in his letters to the Central Committee of the Party that the Bolsheviks could and should take the state power into their hands, seeing that they had the support of the majority of the people. On October 7 Lenin secretly arrived in Petrograd, and on the following day he and Stalin met.

On October 10, 1917, the historic meeting of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party took place under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin. After hearing Lenin's report, the Central Committee unanimously decided to launch the armed uprising against the Provisional Government within the next few days. Only two traitors, Kamenev and Zinoviev, openly spoke against the armed uprising and in favour of leaving the power in the hands of the bourgeoisie. Although at this meeting Trotsky did not vote against the resolution directly, he moved an amendment which would have reduced the chances of the uprising to nought and rendered it abortive. He proposed that the uprising should not be started before the Second Congress of Soviets met, a proposal which meant delaying the uprising, divulging its date, and forewarning the Provisional Government.

Rejecting the proposals of the traitors the Central Committee of the Party, guided by Lenin and Stalin, started extensive preparations for the armed uprising. Armed workers' detachments (the Red Guard) and revolutionary troops and sailors prepared for the uprising. The Central Committee of the Party sent its representatives to the Donets Basin, the Urals and other working-class centres, and also to the western, southwestern and other fronts to organize the uprising in the provinces. On the instructions of the Central Committee a Revolutionary Military Committee of the Petrograd Soviet was set up.

On October 16 an enlarged meeting of the Central Committee of the Party approved the earlier decision regarding the armed uprising and elected a Party Centre, headed by Comrade Stalin, to direct the uprising. This Party Centre was the leading core of the Revolutionary Military Committee and had practical direction of the whole uprising.

At this meeting of the Central Committee Kamenev and Zinoviev again opposed the uprising and again met with the unanimous rebuff of the members of the Central Committee. They thereupon openly came out against the Party, printing a statement in a bourgeois newspaper about the preparations for a Bolshevik armed uprising and thus disclosing to the enemy of the revolution the plans of the Bolsheviks. This was downright treachery. But it did not help the contemptible traitors to save the bourgeoisie from doom.

Forewarned by the traitors the bourgeois Provisional Government tried to prevent the uprising and to destroy the staff of the revolution—the Bolshevik Party. It hastily summoned troops from the front for the purpose. But nothing could now halt the victorious march of the socialist revolution. Boldly and confidently, firmly yet circumspectly, Lenin and Stalin led the Party and the working class in the assault against the bourgeois power.

The Armed Uprising

On the morning of October 24, 1917, the Bolshevik newspaper *Rabochy Put* (*Workers' Path*), printed in place of *Pravda*, which had been closed down by the bourgeois authorities, carried an editorial by Stalin entitled "What Do We Need?" This editorial was a call to the masses to overthrow the bourgeois Provisional Government. Detachments of revolutionary soldiers and Red Guards were rushed to the Smolny Institute, the headquarters of the Petrograd Soviet. The armed uprising had begun.

Lenin insisted that the power be wrested from the Provisional Government before the 25th, and that this absolutely be done in the evening or night of the 24th. On the night of October 24 Lenin arrived at the Smolny. Following the instructions of Lenin and Stalin detachments of Red Guards and soldiers occupied the railway stations, post office, telegraph office, the Ministries and the State Bank. The uprising was organized and simultaneous, the Petrograd workers and revolutionary troops displaying unparalleled heroism in the struggle for the victory of the revolution. The firm leadership of the Bolsheviks, and the vigorous and heroic fighting by the Red Guards, revolutionary troops and sailors secured the overthrow of the power of the capitalists and landlords.

On October 25 (November 7, New Style), 1917, the socialist revolution triumphed. The same day the Revolutionary Military Committee issued a manifesto "To the Citizens of Russia" announcing that the Provisional Government had been deposed and that state power had passed into the hands of the Soviets. The Provisional Government took refuge in the Winter Palace under the protection of counterrevolutionary units but the revolutionary workers, soldiers and sailors surrounded the Palace, while the Petropavlovsk Fortress and cruiser *Aurora*, lying at anchor on the Neva, trained their guns on the Palace. It

was the thunder of their guns that ushered in the triumph of the Great October Socialist Revolution. In the early hours of October 26 the revolutionary workers, soldiers and sailors stormed the last refuge of the last bourgeois government in Russia. The real masters of the country—the workers and peasants—had come into their rights.

Petrograd was followed by Moscow where, after fierce fighting the armed uprising was victorious. The revolution triumphed in all other towns of the country, rapidly spreading to the army and the countryside. Everywhere the people relieved the bourgeoisie of power, establishing a new, real people's power, Soviet power.

This is how the Bolshevik Party, directed by Lenin and Stalin, led the workers and peasants of Russia to the great historic victory over the capitalists and landlords in October 1917, to the triumph of the socialist revolution, to the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The First Decrees of Soviet Power

On October 25 and 26 (November 7 and 8), 1917, the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies was in session in Petrograd. Voicing the will of the workers, soldiers and peasants of Russia and backed by the victory of the armed uprising, the Second Congress of Soviets proclaimed that all power in the land had passed to the Soviets. The Congress formed the first workers' and peasants' government in the world—the Council of People's Commissars. Lenin was elected Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and Stalin People's Commissar for the Affairs of the Nationalities.

The truly people's character of the new power was revealed already in the initial phase of its activities. For the first time in history a government was formed which

realized the age-old hopes and aspirations of the working people.

The Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets adopted a decree on peace. It called upon all belligerent peoples and their governments to start immediate negotiations for a just and democratic peace that would prohibit any country from seizing foreign territories. Thus, the Soviet regime was the first to raise the banner of struggle to release mankind from the horrors of imperialist wars, for a just and democratic peace, for friendship among nations.

The Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets adopted the Lenin Decree on Land. The peasant's age-old dream, the dream for which he had fought over the centuries, had come true. The peasants received for their free use more than 150,000,000 dessiatins of land that had been confiscated from the landlords, the bourgeoisie, the tsar and the churches. The peasants were released from paying rent to the landlords, which had amounted to about 500,000,000 gold rubles annually. Private ownership of land was abolished forever and replaced by public, or state ownership of the land. This delivered the peasants from bondage to the landlords and was an imperative condition to building their life along new, socialist lines.

The Soviet Government introduced the 8-hour working day at the factories and established workers' control over production. The banks, railways and mercantile fleet were taken away from the capitalists and handed over to the state. This was followed by nationalization of large-scale industry.

The conversion of the land, factories, mills, banks, railways, etc., into public, state property had a decisive influence on the further development of our country. It undermined the economic might of the bourgeoisie and landlords and laid the foundations for a socialist, people's economy.

In November 1917 the Soviet Government issued "The Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia," signed by Lenin and Stalin. The Soviet state established the equality and independence of the peoples of Russia, removed all national restrictions and privileges, recognized the right of all nations to self-determination, to the point of secession and forming independent states. The national oppression of the bourgeoisie and landlords was abolished. This laid the foundations for the free and lasting union of nations of our country.

4. THE WORLD HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GREAT OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

**The October Revolution Laid the Foundations
for the Victory of Socialism in the U.S.S.R.**

The Great October Socialist Revolution was a turning point in the life of Russia. It wrested the country from the capitalist system and directed her along an entirely new path, the path of Socialism.

On October 25 (November 7), 1917, the first day of the victorious revolution, Lenin stated:

"The significance of this revolution is, first of all, that we shall have a Soviet Government, our own organ of power, in which the bourgeoisie will have no share whatever. The oppressed masses will themselves create a power. The old state apparatus will be shattered to its foundations and a new administrative apparatus set up in the shape of the Soviet organizations.

"From now on, a new phase in the history of Russia begins, and this revolution, the third Russian Revolution, should in the end lead to the victory of Socialism."*

The Great October Socialist Revolution abolished the power of the capitalists and landlords and shattered the old, bourgeois-landlord state apparatus. The dictatorship of the proletariat was established in Russia. For the first time in history the oppressed masses created their own

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 26, p. 208.

power, the power of workers and peasants, built up their own, Soviet state apparatus.

The Soviet state, brought into being by the Great October Socialist Revolution, succeeded in crushing the resistance of the overthrown exploiting classes, in defending the Soviet land from its internal and external enemies and in developing socialist construction. The Great October Socialist Revolution secured the victory of Socialism in the U.S.S.R.

The October Revolution created all the conditions necessary for a steady improvement in the material well-being of the working people and for raising their cultural standard. It blazed the trail to a free and happy life. "Our Revolution," said Comrade Stalin, "is the only one which not only smashed the fetters of capitalism and brought the people freedom, but also succeeded in creating the material conditions of prosperous life for the people. Therein lies the strength and invincibility of our revolution."*

The October Revolution destroyed national oppression. All the formerly oppressed peoples of our country became equal members of the Soviet family of nations.

The October Revolution abolished the inequality of women. The working women were the most oppressed of all the oppressed. The Great October Socialist Revolution emancipated them from oppression and made them equal members of society, and active builders of Communism.

The October Revolution led our country out of the imperialist war and delivered our people for always from the bitter obligation of shedding their blood in the interests of the Russian and foreign bourgeoisie.

The October Revolution took place at a time when Russia was threatened with losing her independence completely. Had the workers and peasants not carried out the

* J. Stalin, *Speech at the First All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites*, Moscow 1950, p. 19.

socialist revolution under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party, Russia would have been turned into a colony of the imperialist states. The October Revolution saved our country from being enslaved by foreign powers and secured her freedom and independence. It created the conditions for overcoming Russia's time-old backwardness and turning her into the most advanced and powerful state in the world.

The October Revolution Opened a New Epoch in the History of Mankind

The October Revolution is of the greatest significance not only to the peoples of our country, but also to the whole world. It deeply influenced, and still does, the development of all countries.

Before the Great October Socialist Revolution the changes in the development of society amounted to one set of exploiters, being replaced by another set of exploiters, but exploitation, the oppression of the working people remained.

Comrade Stalin writes:

"The history of nations knows not a few revolutions. But those revolutions differ from the October Revolution in that they were one-sided revolutions. One form of exploitation of the working people was replaced by another form of exploitation; but exploitation, as such, remained. One set of exploiters and oppressors was replaced by another set of exploiters and oppressors; but exploiters and oppressors, as such, remained. Only the October Revolution set itself the aim of abolishing *all* exploitation and of eliminating *all* exploiters and oppressors of every brand."*

The October Revolution, as distinct from all other revolutions, overthrew all exploiters and transferred power

* J. Stalin, *Speech Delivered at the First All-Union Congress of Collective-Farm Shock Workers*, Moscow 1950, p. 11.

- to the most revolutionary class of the working people, the proletariat. Under its leadership the old system of exploitation was destroyed and a new, socialist system established in which exploitation and oppression have no place.

∴ The Great October Socialist Revolution marked a radical turning point in the history of mankind—from the old, capitalist, world to the new, socialist world.

Before the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution capitalism held sway throughout the world; the revolution deprived it of its biggest country, Russia, which occupies one-sixth of the globe.

The result: the single, all-embracing capitalist system was breached, the world split into two systems: the capitalist and socialist systems. The very existence of the new, socialist system, undermines the power of world capitalism, shakes it to its foundations.

The Great October Socialist Revolution inspired the proletariat of the world with confidence in their strength and in the victory of their cause.

The bourgeoisie claim that the exploited cannot manage without the exploiters. The October Revolution showed the working people of all countries that they could rid themselves of the exploiters and successfully build a new life.

The bourgeoisie claim that capitalist property is inviolable, sacred and eternal. The October Revolution deprived the capitalists of their plundered wealth and made it the property of the people.

The bourgeoisie claim that mankind is divided into inferior and superior races, and that the former must submit to the latter. The October Revolution proved that all nations, once emancipated, can successfully develop their economy and culture. In abolishing national oppression in our country the Soviet government showed the oppressed peoples of the world the path leading to their liberation.

The October Revolution exposed the theory of the compromising parties which claimed that Socialism could be achieved without a class struggle and by collaborating with the bourgeoisie.

The October Socialist Revolution marked the beginning of the collapse of world capitalism, ushered in a new era in the history of mankind—the era of Socialism. The Soviet people are justly proud of the fact that their country is the birthplace of this really great revolution.

Lenin wrote:

“... We have a right to be and are proud of the fact that to us has fallen the good fortune to *begin* the erection of a Soviet state, and thereby to *usher in* a new era in world history, the era of the rule of a *new* class, a class which is oppressed in every capitalist country, but which everywhere is marching forward towards a new life, towards victory over the bourgeoisie, towards the dictatorship of the proletariat—and towards the emancipation of mankind from the yoke of capital and from imperialist wars.”*

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Volume ed., Vol. II, Part 2, Moscow 1951, p. 597.

5. DEFEAT OF THE INTERVENTIONISTS AND WHITEGUARDS

The Socialist Fatherland Is in Danger

From the very first days of its existence the Soviet Republic was faced with severe trials. The capitalists and landlords bitterly resisted the victorious workers and peasants. The old tsarist officials in the Ministries, banks and other institutions refused to work with the new power and maliciously sabotaged the measures of the young Soviet state apparatus. With the help of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, Trotskyites, Bukharinites and other enemies of the people the capitalists and landlords hatched counterrevolutionary plots, instigated anti-Soviet revolts, assassinated Party and Government leaders.

Notwithstanding the enormous difficulties, the Party and Soviet government successfully crushed the resistance of the enemy. Supported by the workers and peasants the Soviet Government exposed the machinations of the overthrown exploiting classes and foiled all their plans. The All-Russian Extraordinary Commission (Vecheka), formed in the initial period of Soviet power, and headed by the staunch revolutionary Felix Dzerzhinsky, waged a ruthless struggle against the bourgeois-landlord counterrevolution.

Soviet power penetrated to all parts of the country. At the end of 1917 and beginning of 1918 it spread at such

a rapid rate that Lenin referred to it as the triumphal march of Soviet power.

After having crushed the early resistance of the internal counterrevolution the young Soviet Republic had to fight the forces of foreign imperialism. Toward the end of 1917 the Soviet government started peace negotiations with Germany. Lenin and Stalin considered it imperative to conclude this peace and thus enable the Soviet country restore its economy and start socialist construction. But all the Russian counterrevolutionaries: the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, Trotskyites and Bukharinites conducted a frenzied campaign against the conclusion of peace. Taking advantage of the treachery of Trotsky and Bukharin, the German imperialists broke off the peace negotiations in February 1918 and treacherously invaded the Soviet land with the object of overthrowing the Soviet power, converting Russia into a German colony and enslaving our people.

The old army crumbled before the onslaught of the armed German hosts which advanced on the Ukraine and Byelorussia and approached Petrograd. Mortal danger threatened our country.

In those decisive days Lenin and Stalin issued the call to the Soviet people "The socialist fatherland is in danger!" appealing to the workers and soldiers to defend every position to the last drop of blood. And in response the working people rose en masse in a sacred war against the German invaders.

Lenin and Stalin organized the workers' and peasants' Red Army to defend the Soviet Republic from its external and internal enemies. The young detachments of the Red Army received their first baptism of fire in battle against the German intervention troops, heroically resisting the marauders who were armed to the teeth. At Narva and Pskov the German invaders met with a resolute repulse. Their advance on Petrograd was checked.

February 23, 1918—the great day the troops of imperialist Germany were repulsed—is regarded as the birthday of the Red Army, and is celebrated every year in our country.

In March the Soviet government concluded a peace treaty with Germany. It was forced to accept the onerous terms imposed because it needed a respite from the war to consolidate the Soviet state, to create a powerful Red Army, and to start peaceful socialist construction.

End of the Respite and Beginning of Foreign Military Intervention

The respite won by the Soviet Republic was short-lived. It was broken by the imperialists of Great Britain, France, Japan, the United States and other countries who after the German imperialists, took up arms against Soviet Russia. The imperialists of these countries wanted to crush the Soviet power, to restore the bourgeois-landlord order, to seize the Soviet lands and their wealth and to enslave our people. With this object in view they embarked on an armed invasion of Soviet Russia.

In 1918 the Japanese marauders landed troops in the Far East and seized Vladivostok, the Maritime Province and North Sakhalin. The British imperialists occupied Archangelsk, Murmansk, Baku and parts of Central Asia. Wherever they set foot they perpetrated outrages of the worst kind against the workers and peasants. In September 1918, for instance, the British imperialists, with the aid of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, had twenty-six Baku commissars including Stepan Shaumyan, Alyosha Djaparidze, Meshadi Azizbekov, Ivan Fioletov, shot in the Transcaspiian region.

In August 1918 American troops landed in Siberia, occupying the territory up to April 1919. Like the Japanese,

British and other interventionists they burned Russian villages, unleashed a reign of terror against the Russian population, shooting hundreds of workers and peasants. General Graves, the American commander, admitted that by invading Soviet territory the United States took part in the efforts to overthrow the Soviets. That is also why Wilson, President of the United States at that time, undertook to help Admiral Kolchak with supplies, arms and provisions and make his government an all-Russian government. In pursuance of this the United States sent the Whiteguard armies hundreds of thousands of rifles, millions of cartridges, machine guns, guns and equipment of every kind.

The interventionists operated in close alliance with the counterrevolutionaries in Russia. The Russian capitalists and landlords bartered our country, readily handed over to the foreign imperialists our territories, grain, oil and industry in order with the help of the invaders to restore their rule in the country and again oppress the working people. Thus, two forces united in the struggle against the Soviet power: the foreign imperialists and counterrevolutionaries at home.

The Whiteguards, Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and other counterrevolutionary scum engineered anti-Soviet revolts in Moscow, Yaroslavl and other cities in the country. In the East the bourgeois and landlord counterrevolutionaries reared their head and overthrew Soviet power in a number of important parts of Siberia and in the Volga region. The enemies of the workers and peasants in the meantime organized terroristic acts against leading figures of the Party and the Soviet government. In June 1918 the Socialist-Revolutionaries assassinated Volodarsky in Petrograd. In August of the same year they assassinated Uritsky in Petrograd, and in Moscow made a villainous attempt on the life of Lenin.

In the summer of 1918 mortal danger threatened Tsaritsyn. General Krasnov's bands were surrounding the

town; inside Whites and traitors were plotting. In order to procure grain and save Tsaritsyn Lenin sent Stalin there. Once there Stalin secured a radical change in the situation within a short space of time, dispatched substantial supplies of food to the starving capitals, saved Tsaritsyn and prevented the Whites from breaking through to Moscow. Tsaritsyn was subsequently renamed Stalingrad in honour of its heroic defence under Stalin's leadership in 1918.

Campaigns of the Entente

The foreign bourgeois states proclaimed a blockade of the Soviet Republic, that is, cut all sea routes and other lines of communication with the outside world. No manufactured goods, provisions or medicaments could reach Soviet Russia. Simultaneously, the imperialists of Great Britain, France, Japan and the United States sent their troops against the Soviet Republic where they rode roughshod over the country, drenching it in blood and plundering it of its wealth.

The British, U.S., Japanese and French imperialists organized and inspired all the anti-Soviet campaigns and supplied the Whites with arms, equipment and army instructors. The British General Knox wrote: We shipped to Siberia hundreds of thousands of rifles, hundreds of millions of cartridges, hundreds of thousands of army uniforms, machine-gun cartridge belts, etc. Every bullet sent into the Bolsheviks was produced in Britain.

The Soviet Republic's bitterest enemy Churchill, British War Minister at that time, announced the campaign of fourteen bourgeois states against Soviet Russia.

In 1919-1920 when the intervention against Soviet Russia was at its highest the Entente, having vanquished Germany and Austria, organized three campaigns against Soviet Russia hurling large military forces against it.

The first campaign was launched in the spring of 1919. The imperialists placed their chief hopes in Admiral Kolchak, their puppet in Siberia, who had almost reached the Volga with his armies and had proclaimed himself the supreme ruler of Russia. General Denikin's troops were fighting against the Soviet power in the south and General Yudenich's armies were operating in the northwest. Yudenich was advancing on Petrograd from the direction of the Baltic. The Central Committee of the Party sent Stalin to Petrograd to organize its defence, and the threat to the city was removed. This made it easier to tackle Kolchak, and his army was completely routed at the end of 1919.

General Denikin headed the Entente's second campaign. In the autumn of 1919 his troops took Orel and were nearing Tula, threatening to capture Moscow. The Party and the Soviet Government mobilized all forces at this decisive period to fight Denikin. Stalin's plan to defeat Denikin, was approved and carried out under Stalin's direction. Denikin's troops were completely routed. Defeated at Orel and Voronezh they fled to the south. By the beginning of 1920 the whole of the Ukraine and the North Caucasus were cleared of the Whites.

In its third campaign the Entente utilized the forces of the Polish gentry and the troops of the Whiteguard General Wrangel who had entrenched himself in the Crimea. Both Poland and General Wrangel were supplied by the British and the French with arms, armoured cars, tanks, planes and ammunition of the latest type. But they met with the same failure as Kolchak and Denikin in their campaign against the Soviet Republic. In October 1920 Soviet Russia concluded a peace treaty with Poland. In November of the same year Red Army units under M. V. Frunze liberated the Crimea of the interventionists and Whiteguards, thus victoriously ending the Civil War as a whole. (It ended later in some regions. Japanese intervention in the Far East lasted until 1922.)

"The war of the foreign interventionists and the Russian Whiteguards against the Soviets ended in a victory for the Soviets.

"The Soviet Republic preserved its independence and freedom..

"This was the end of foreign military intervention and Civil War.

"This was a historic victory for the Soviet power."*

The Soviet Country—One Armed Camp

In order to vanquish the intervention armies and the Whiteguards the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet state took measures to strengthen the Red Army and the Soviet rear.

The whole country was placed at the service of the front. To secure victory over the enemy the Soviet government took all industry under its control, including the middle-sized and small industries, prohibited private trading, and established the surplus-appropriation system under which the peasants had to turn in all surplus produce for provisioning the army and workers. Under the exigencies of war the government was obliged to introduce food rationing. It also introduced universal labour service for all classes making physical labour compulsory for the bourgeoisie.

All these measures, which were necessitated by the Civil War, were in their entirety known as War Communism. Without War Communism the Soviet power would not have emerged victorious in the Civil War.

In their policy in the countryside the Party and the Soviet Government relied in the main on the poor peas-

* *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks). Short Course*, Moscow 1950, p. 300.

ants. The government waged a vigorous struggle against the kulaks who refused to sell grain to the state at fixed prices. The kulaks wanted to strangle the Soviet Republic through starvation and restore the former system. The Party organized the poor peasants to smash the kulaks and to support the measures of the Soviet government. In 1918 Committees of the Poor Peasants were formed. These committees were strongholds of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the villages and played an important part in the struggle against the kulaks and in supplying the army and population with foodstuffs. "The struggle for bread is a struggle for Socialism," Lenin said at that time.

The Party's correct policy toward the middle peasant was most important in ensuring the victory over the interventionists and Whites. The Lenin Decree had given the peasants land; the middle peasants now comprised the bulk of the peasant population, and not the poor peasants as had been the case before the revolution. The outcome of the Civil War largely depended on which class would win over the middle peasant—the proletariat or the bourgeoisie.

In the early months after the victory of the October Revolution the middle peasant vacillated between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. But beginning with the autumn of 1918 there was a change in the attitude of the mass of the middle peasants. The peasants realized that if the interventionists and Whites were victorious the landlords would restore their rule and seize the land of the peasants. The middle peasants began to swing over to the Soviet power. The alliance between the working class and working peasants, led by the working class, played a most important part in the victorious outcome of the Civil War.

Why the Red Army Was Victorious

The enemies of the Soviet power—the interventionists and Whiteguards—had many advantages. They had a ready army, experienced officers, first-class arms, ammunition and equipment. Furthermore they occupied the richest food-producing regions of Russia at one time.

The Soviet Republic was in a difficult position. It was hemmed in by the blazing circle of the fronts. At one period three-quarters of the Soviet land was in the hands of the foreign invaders. The Soviet Republic was short of grain, arms and equipment.

And notwithstanding all these difficulties the Soviet Republic emerged the victor from this unequal combat. The armies of the interventionists and Whiteguards were completely smashed.

How is this to be explained?

The armies of the interventionists and Whiteguards fought for aims that were alien to the people, for the interests of the capitalists and landlords. That is why they could not meet with the sympathy and support of the people. The Red Army, on the other hand, fought for the cause of liberating the workers and peasants from the bourgeois-landlord yoke, for the freedom and independence of their socialist motherland. It fought for the Soviet regime which was pursuing the only right policy, one that fully corresponded to the interests of the people. The people understood this policy as their own policy and supported it unreservedly.

The Red Army is the offspring of the people. It is loyal and faithful to its people; that is why the people love and support their army. Its indissoluble ties with the people made the Red Army a great, invincible force in the fighting against the intervention and Whiteguard hordes.

The Soviet troops understood the aims and purposes of the war and recognized their justice. This strengthened the fighting efficiency of the Red Army, its revolutionary

discipline and organization. The Red Army men courageously fought the enemy which had attacked the country from all sides, displayed unparalleled self-sacrifice and heroism.

The Red Army was victorious because the heroic party of Lenin and Stalin was its leading and organizing spirit. At the time of the Civil War nearly half of the Party membership went to the front. The Party produced from its ranks such organizers and agitators as the military commissars who cemented the ranks of the Red Army and fostered in it the spirit of discipline and courage.

The Bolshevik Party was the leading core both at the front and in the rear. It converted the country into an armed camp. The rear supplied the front with arms, ammunition, equipment, food and reinforcements. Splendid Bolsheviks operated behind the lines of the Whiteguard armies, raising the workers and peasants in revolt against the interventionists and Whiteguards. They undermined the rear of the foe and thereby facilitated the advance of the Red Army. By their operations the partisans of the Ukraine, Siberia, the Far East, the Urals, Byelorussia and the Volga region rendered invaluable service to the Soviet troops.

The Bolshevik Party raised the masses of workers and peasants in a patriotic war against the foreign invaders and bourgeois and landlord Whiteguards. The incredible difficulties of this war and their successful elimination vividly demonstrated the strength and energy the mass of workers and peasants can display if they are led by the Bolshevik Party. The discipline of the Bolsheviks united in their solidarity, their revolutionary readiness for any sacrifice for the success of the common cause, their ability to organize millions and to lead them properly in complex situations, determined the outcome of the fierce Civil War battles.

The struggle of the Soviet state against the interventionists and Whiteguards enlisted the sympathy and sup-

port of the workers of all countries. The governments of the capitalist countries dispatched their troops against Soviet Russia and tried to stifle the first workers' and peasants' state in the world, but the workers of these countries called strikes, refused to load munitions consigned to the invaders and the Whiteguards, and set up "Hands off Russia!" Councils of Action. "The international bourgeoisie has only to raise its hand against us to have it seized by its own workers,"* wrote Lenin.

Lenin and Stalin, the leaders of the Bolshevik Party and Soviet state played a paramount part in the defeat of the interventionists and Whiteguards. Lenin courageously and with a firm hand steered the Soviet ship through the storm of the Civil War. He worked tirelessly to build up the defence of the Soviet state, organized the Red Army and inspired it in battle; worked indefatigably to strengthen the Soviet rear. Lenin headed the Council of Workers' and Peasants' Defence, which mobilized the country's man power and economic resources for the needs of the front.

Comrade Stalin was Lenin's chief mainstay in the organization and direction of the defence of the Soviet Republic. During the Civil War the Central Committee of the Party, and Lenin personally, sent Stalin to the most crucial fronts, wherever the threat to the revolution was most imminent, wherever the advance of the interventionists and Whiteguards threatened the very existence of the Soviet regime. And wherever he went Stalin secured victory. Stalin directed the military operations at Tsaritsyn and Perm, at Petrograd and against Denikin, against the Polish gentry and Wrangel. He drew up brilliant plans for routing the enemy and successfully carried out these plans. It was Stalin who directly inspired and organized the major victories of the Red Army.

* *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks). Short Course*, Moscow 1950, p. 304.

Under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party, under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin the workers and peasants of Soviet Russia beat off the first invasion of the foreign imperialists on the socialist fatherland. Supported by the workers and peasants the Red Army cleared Soviet territory of the enemy, saved the Soviet regime, and the great gains of the October Revolution, secured the state independence of the socialist fatherland and made it possible for the working people of the Soviet land to pass over to peaceful socialist construction.

BRIEF SUMMARY

At the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century capitalism entered the last stage of its development—imperialism. Under imperialism the contradictions of capitalism were aggravated to the extreme. Imperialism gave rise to predatory world wars. Imperialism is the eve of the socialist revolution.

The war of 1914-1918 was an imperialist war for the redivision of the world. The Bolsheviks called on the workers and peasants to convert the imperialist war into a civil war.

In February 1917 the workers and peasants of Russia overthrew the tsarist autocracy. The Bolshevik Party roused the working class and the poor peasants to develop the revolution further, to overthrow capitalism and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Great October Socialist Revolution deposed capitalism and laid the foundation for the building of Socialism in our country. The Great October Socialist Revolution showed that the age of capitalism was drawing to a close. It ushered in a new era in the history of mankind—the era of Socialism.

The young Soviet state, which came into being in the fire of the October Revolution, in fierce battles with the combined forces of the foreign invaders and Whiteguards, upheld its freedom and independence. The Bolshevik Party, led by Lenin and Stalin, organized and secured the victory of the Soviet socialist state over its enemies.

With the defeat of the enemies of the Soviet Republic in the Civil War the working people of the Soviet country were able to embark on peaceful socialist construction.

Printed in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.